

Deborah.Easterling

242728

From: Deborah.Easterling
Sent: Friday, April 05, 2013 10:47 AM
To: 'Linda Stevenson'
Cc: Scott Elliott (sellott@elliottlaw.us) (sellott@elliottlaw.us); Nelson, Jeff; Hudson, Shannon; Terreni, Charles L.A. (charles.terreni@terrenilaw.com); John Hoefer (jhoefer@willoughbyhoefer.com) (jhoefer@willoughbyhoefer.com)
Subject: RE: More sewage o verflows

Dear Ms. Stevenson,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your email of April 2, 2013 to the Public Service Commission. I am forwarding your email to our Clerk's Office for processing. The email will become a part of Docket No. 2012-177-WS and will be posted on our website under this docket.

Please let me know if you should require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Deborah Easterling
Administrative Assistant

From: Linda Stevenson [mailto:lks@comporium.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2013 10:58 AM
To: Linda Stevenson
Subject: More sewage o verflows

Despite the fact that Tega Cay Water Service stated under oath they had made many improvements to the TCWS system and had no spills, there have been 4 SSO's since January 18, 2013 and five homes have sewage spills. This is simply NOT acceptable.

Published: Tuesday, Apr. 02, 2013 / Updated: Monday, Apr. 01, 2013 05:02 PM
Sewage overflows concerns neighbors in Tega Cay
By John Marks - jmarks@fortmilltimes.com
TEGA CAY –

Richard Dwyer isn't interested in the politics of what happened at his house, or even the specifics of the remedy.

He just wants to feel safe living there again.

"I just hope that they make it right," Dwyer said Wednesday, as crews unearthed piping beneath his driveway.

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John Marks - jmarks@fortmilltimes.com - Crews repaired sewer pipes on Point Clear Drive in Tega Cay last week after sewage backed up into a Tega Cay home. JOHN MARKS - jmarks@fortmilltimes.com

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Dwyer said water backed up three or four times and he hired a plumber to snake the pipes. No problems were found. Then, on March 19, he woke in the night to find sewage flooding the single-level home from both bathrooms. It was the smell first that woke him.

After streaming the sewage out the back of his house, Dwyer is concerned that his yard is now polluted, too. The house he's had 35 years was remodeled two years ago. Tega Cay Water Service representatives and an insurance adjustor made multiple trips, and crews had the driveway connecting Dwyer's and several more homes blocked off during the day last Wednesday for pipe repair.

"In the meantime, I've got sewage down in my vents, I've got sewage in my carpet, I've got sewage in my tiles," Dwyer said. "I've had people tell me I shouldn't even be in the house."

Dwyer works 12-hour days but returns at lunchtime to take care of his wife, who because of medical issues can't leave their home. He's concerned about what she is exposed to as cleanup continues.

According to the company, the sewage backup wasn't the result of recent, heavy rain.

"It was related to roots coming into the sewer main at the point where the customer's sewer line (also known as the lateral) entered," said Tom Oakley, analyst with Tega Cay Water Service parent company Utilities, Inc.

"These homes were built approximately 40 years ago and clay pipe was used, so yes, it is not uncommon to have root issues."

When the houses were built, lines from neighboring homes tied into one another rather than into the main. That construction wouldn't be approved today, Oakley said.

Last week's repairs tapped each home's lines into the sewer main and a section of main was replaced where a crack developed.

As Dwyer worries about his own house, other Tega Cay residents are concerned that more incidents like this one could happen.

The Tega Cay Water Citizen Advisory Council is led by Linda Stevenson, who also says she experienced a sewage backup into her home two years ago – on Easter. Stevenson said there’ve been three recent backups in Tega Cay. Her group tries to collect reports of problems to use in rate cases or other decisions involving Tega Cay Water Service.

“We are still trying all angles,” she said.

Group members say they’re particularly frustrated by ongoing problems given that the company recently received water and sewer rate increases based on, according to state decision makers, having pumped money into the system for upgrades and repairs.

Oakley said the company continues to inspect and clean sewer mains systemwide, correcting problems as they’re identified. Last week, the company smoke-tested the system. As the company makes repairs like the recent one, new cleanouts are installed.

“Many of our customers do not have cleanouts installed on their sewer lines from the house to the main,”

Oakley said. “Without the cleanouts it can be difficult to inspect or clear blockages.”

Dwyer said he’s had suggestions of what to do next, including suing the utility.

He joked last week that maybe rate increases were needed for all the cleanup he has coming.

Given problems elsewhere within the system, he’s not optimistic this incident will be the last.

“This isn’t going to be the end of it,” Dwyer said.

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